

Response ID ANON-8CC9-KD1F-W

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-03-02 20:20:29**

Your details

What is your name?

Forename:

Roy

Surname:

Bulgin

Are you making an individual response or on behalf of an organisation?

Individual

If individual, please tell us what type:

Resident of Somerset West and Taunton

Name of organisation:

Please choose one from the drop-down list:

What is your (personal/organisational) address?

██████████
████████████████████

██████████
██████████

What is your email address?

██████████
████████████████████

1. Overview and objectives

Do you agree that these are the right Objectives for the Local Plan?

Agree

Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):

Broadly agree but the but in Objectives 2 and 8 the term 'affordable housing' is used but the term 'affordable' does not appear to be defined. I would like to see Social Housing included as well.

2. Carbon neutrality

Question 1a: Should we aim to require that all new development is 'zero carbon' by as soon as possible (e.g. by 2025) or give slightly more time (e.g. by 2030) for developers to adapt their design approaches, materials and suppliers?

Slightly more time (e.g. by 2030)

Question 1b: Should we allocate sites for specific renewable energy development or identify broad areas which we consider suitable?

A combination of both of the above

Question 1c: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?

Please provide comments (250 words max):

1a. 2030 is a more realistic achievement because the government consultations have not yet reached their conclusion.

1b. A mix of sustainable energy systems should be used therefore, as is happening now, sites need to be in the most productive places, be it for wind, solar or water power.

3. Sustainable locations

Question 2a: Do you agree with the tiers that identifies Taunton followed by 6 tiers covering the other settlements?

Yes

If not, what changes would you make and why? (200 words max):

In line with our emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

Question 2b: Do you think Watchet and Williton should be seen as associated settlements for the purposes of the Local Plan due to their close proximity and in complementing the services of each other (and therefore be in a higher tier to Bishops Lydeard and Wiveliscombe)?

No - Watchet and Williton should be seen as separate settlements

Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):

Williton and Watchet are separate settlements and linking the two would not be advisable due to the lack of infrastructure to support it, and the topographical nature of the area.

Question 2c: Do you think we should carry on with the way housing is currently distributed across our area (see pie chart) or should we be doing something different, such as one of the three options suggested below?

Leave housing distribution the same

Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):

Regardless of housing distribution in SWT, known areas that are prone/liable to flood should be protected. Villages on the edge of Taunton must not be gobbled up in some urban sprawl unless identified small sites are in their Neighbourhood Plans.

What else do you think about housing distribution in our area?

Please provide comments (250 words max):

2c The mix is good but changes of use from employment to housing should be resisted.

The reliance on public transport is questionable because it is not being used now - witness the number of rural bus services that have been cut. Also the provision of a station at Wellington is very remote.

Taunton should have a larger share of new housing, but this is in the hands of developers.

Question 2d: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?

Please provide comments (250 words max):

No problem with the policy approaches. However I am concerned that the infrastructure, even with the rather pointless 'improvements' being made, mainly to facilitate a proposed employment site off J25, will not be produced if SWT and SCC Highways efforts so far are anything to go by.

4. New and affordable homes

Question 3a: Should our housing requirement figure match the Government's minimum figure of 702 dwellings per year or should we have a higher figure?

The housing requirement should be the Government's minimum figure of 702 dwellings per year

Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):

The infrastructure is not there and if the past is anything to go by will not be there to support any higher.

Question 3b: How should we proactively plan for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches?

Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):

I cannot answer this question using the tick boxes. Experience has shown that the Gypsy and Travelling fraternity do not seem to want defined sites. What happens if they are full for example. We need to be more involved with them to truly understand their requirements than telling them where they can go. A difficult conundrum.

Question 3c: Should we require that all new housing developments include a percentage of new homes that are designed to be accessible, adaptable and wheelchair accessible?

Require a proportion of dwellings to meet the category standard as set out in Building Regulations Part M.

Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):

As an elderly person whose wife became disabled I took steps to make our home more accessible. I can now live here quite safely until I feel the need to move. I think all people of my years should be able to live in their own homes if they so desire.

There are basic things that could be included in new builds at minimal extra cost.

Question 3d: How should we provide for custom self-build plots? Should we:

Include a positive encouragement policy, including for community-led projects, and leave the housing market to deliver plots as and when demand arises; and/or

Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):

No further comment

Question 3e: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Agree with these statements.

5. A prosperous economy

Question 4a: Should we ensure the growth of our local economy through an increase in the proportion of higher value jobs (with limited increase of jobs overall) or through a significant increase in the number of jobs?

Develop bespoke and realistic growth ambitions linked to the Council's Economic Development (Prosperity) Strategy (i.e. increase the proportion of higher value jobs within existing overall job numbers and not pursue a significant increase in job numbers overall); or

Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):

The point here is that the Council's Economic Dev Strategy over the years has not produced jobs, higher value or otherwise. Could I suggest that SWT have discussions with our neighbours up the road at Bridgwater and find out how to do it.

Question 4b: Should we keep all of our existing employment sites and allocations in employment use or should we allow the loss of some to other uses? How should we decide which ones to lose?

Retain all existing and currently allocated employment sites; or

Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):

The Local Plan has indicated these sites. SWT should not remove them or allow a change of use.

Question 4c: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Agree with these points. One question, when will the employment units at Monkton Heathfield/ West Monkton be built?

6. Infrastructure

Question 5a: On what infrastructure should we prioritise developer contributions? (Please rank in order of priority)

IO - 5a - ranking - Affordable housing:

1

IO - 5a - ranking - Designing for the Climate Change Emergency:

2

IO - 5a - ranking - Accessible, Adaptable and Wheelchair Accessible homes:

4

IO - 5a - ranking - Strategic Infrastructure (schools, transport, community facilities):

3

Question 5b: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Difficult to prioritise. there are merits in all the points

7. Connecting people

Question 6a: How can we encourage people not to use their car when travelling into our towns for shopping and work? How can we provide more opportunities for using public transport in rural areas?

Please provide comments (200 words max):

Provide a suitable alternative. Unfortunately the public transport is in the hands of private companies and the frequency, availability and regularity of the services is not conducive to encouraging people to use it. In short, if it ain't there it cannot be used. Perhaps some sort of financial inducement to the operators should be more widely considered.

Question 6b: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?

Please provide comments (250 words max):

All good points.

8. The natural and historic environment

Question 7a: Are there any specific measures that you would like to see new developments deliver to improve biodiversity locally?

Please provide comments (200 words max):

Retention of existing ancient hedgerows should be a must. They provided a habitat and a food source for birds, insects and small animals and are wildlife corridors.

Question 7b: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Support these policies. Would like to see included more regular drainage ditch maintenance and dredging of the Parret and Tone.

9. Thriving coastal and rural communities

Question 8a: How should we manage development in rural areas? Should we:

Have settlement boundaries across the District; or

Question 8b: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?

Please provide comments (250 words max):

8a. Keep settlement boundaries. Very important for those close to J25 and liable to flooding close to Taunton.

Ruishton, Henlade and Thornfalcon have been classed here as Higher order settlements where as they are designated as Tier 6 and Tier 7 settlements.

8b. No comment

10. Wellbeing of our residents

Question 9a: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Agree with the comments.

11. Policies for our places: Taunton

Question 10a: How do you think we could introduce more housing into Taunton Town centre?

Encouraging car-free developments (which could include allocating specific sites for car-free developments).

Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):

Definitely not taller buildings. Totally out of character with the sky line and landscape. In order to have a car free environment public transport links, cycleways and high quality well light foot paths need to be considered.

Although not all people use a car to get to work if they live in town they may well have one for recreational use so consideration needs to be given to this. Not 'one size fits all'.

Question 10b: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?

Please provide comments (250 words max):

No added comment needed.

12. Policies for our places: Wellington

Question 11a: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?

Please provide comments (250 words max):

No comment

13. Policies for our places: the Coastal Strip

Question 12a: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?

Please provide comments (250 words max):

I support these policies.